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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UN](#) [PL](#)
SUBJECT: POLAND SUPPORTS U.S. UNGA PRIORITIES, OFFERS A FEW
OF ITS OWN

REF: A. STATE 109397
[1](#)B. 2008 WARSAW 1128

Classified By: Political Counselor Dan Sainz for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (U) THIS MESSAGE CONTAINS AN ACTION REQUEST. PLEASE SEE
PARA 6.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Poland will support UNGA Third Committee
country-specific resolutions on Iran, Burma, and the DPRK.
Although some states argue that the resolutions cross into
the domain of the UN Human Rights Council, MFA UN and Human
Rights Department Deputy Director Krystyna Zurek said the
motions were an essential part of the Third Committee's work.
She agreed with U.S. opposition to no-action motions, noting
they do more than block a vote. They also block discussion
of important issues. Concerning the biennial U.S. resolution
on free elections, MFA Human Rights Division Head Jerzy
Burski said there is consensus among Poland, the EU and the
U.S.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Zurek outlined Poland's priorities for the 2009
Third Committee, namely the resolution on the Convention on
the Rights of the Child (CRC) and an EU-sponsored resolution
on religious tolerance. Zurek said the CRC holds a special
significance for Poland because it led the former UNCHR
working group that drafted the convention. She argued that
since the CRC enjoys almost universal membership, it would be
difficult now to change tack. Deputy PolCouns noted the
State Department's intent to engage in a new interagency
process to carefully review the treaty before deciding
whether to pursue ratification and conveyed U.S. interest in
working with Poland and other EU countries to find acceptable
consensus language.

[1](#)4. (C) Turning to religious tolerance, Burski said Poland
agreed the OIC-sponsored anti-defamation resolution is not a
useful means of addressing the issue. He stressed that more
emphasis should be placed on current tools and mechanisms at
states' disposal. Zurek expressed appreciation for U.S.
leadership in the recently adopted resolution on freedom of
expression at the UN Human Rights Council, noting it had set
an important precedent. She expressed hope it would
encourage other states to undertake cross-regional dialogue.

[1](#)5. (C) Zurek reaffirmed Poland's intent to pursue a seat on
the UN Human Rights Council -- an institution whose
"credibility is at stake" -- during the next round of
elections in May 2010. She hoped the U.S. would support
Poland's candidacy, noting that Poland was interested in
reforming key aspects of the Council's functions when it
comes up for review in 2011. She lamented in particular that
certain countries had been able to use skewed procedures and

loopholes to lock up debate and action on important notions. Zurek cited the example of Cuba's recent Universal Periodic Review, in which the speakers' list was closed hours before discussion of the report began, resulting in a litany of near unanimous praise for Cuba's human rights record. As part of its reform platform, Zurek said Poland supports efforts to break up UN regional bloc-voting.

16. (C) COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST: Poland continues to take a principled stand on human rights issues and sees its partnership with the U.S. as crucial. The MFA responded positively to a September 2008 DVC with counterparts in DRL, IO, and L (ref B) and is interested in pursuing a follow-up DVC in early 2010 in advance of the Human Rights Council. Post requests Department strongly consider supporting such an undertaking, given (1) Poland's interest in running for a seat on the Council and; (2) the fact that key Council reform initiatives will come up for consideration during or immediately after Poland's 2011 EU Presidency. With the right preparation and U.S. input, Poland could play a key role in shaping EU thinking along lines similar to ours.
TULLEY